Christmas Morning Prayer 2011

Fourth Presbyterian Church
John Buchanan

Good and gracious God, our hearts are full to overflowing with gratitude this morning. We thank you for your goodness and love that came down in Bethlehem, in the birth of the child.

We thank you for blessing and honoring our humanness with all its foibles and failures, all its temptations and limitations, by being born into it. We thank you for deciding to come to us, not in royalty, military might, political power, but in a newborn infant. We thank you for teaching us, in him, the power of weakness, the final authority of vulnerability. We thank you for teaching us, in him, the miracle of love given and love received.

We thank you for dear ones, who taught us, years ago, to celebrate Christmas. We thank you for all the Christmases we have shared.

We thank you for those dearest to us this morning, and ask you to bless them each with your love.

We thank you for the safe return of our service men and women and we ask you to keep them in your love as they reunite with their families.

We pray for those who are alone this morning, the sick, in hospitals, those whose celebration is diminished by grief.

We pray for our President and all in authority, that they may govern wisely and justly.

And we pray for the peace the angels promised. Bless and strengthen peacemakers: open minds and hearts to mew possibilities, give courage to lay aside old hatreds and resentments, and open hearts to the saving reality of forgiveness, and love and redemption.

Good and gracious God, you came into the world while all was dark and all were sleeping. Only a mother and a father and sheep and cattle welcomed you. So come into our hearts this day that we may live every day of our lives in gratitude, and faithfulness and joy.

All this we pray in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen